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L9: Entry 1 of 1

File: PGPB

Dec 6, 2001

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 20010049690 A1

TITLE: Method and apparatus for monitoring the effective velocity of items through a store or warehouse

Pre-Grant Publication (PGPub) Document Number:
20010049690Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0003] Another methodology involves performing periodic examination of shelves to see what is not in stock or near out-of-stock and placing an order based on that condition. This second method fails because the person checking the shelves did not observe a stock-out condition, was not able to identify it (for example, because the "hole" was filled with another item--which often occurs in the retail industry), or did not report it, or it was reported but the proper action was not taken.

Summary of Invention Paragraph:

[0010] It is a yet further advantage of the present invention to provide a "Loyalty Out-of-Stock System" that automatically operates on data for one or more stores and models the expected item movement rate for each item under varying time-of-day, day-of-week, price, promotion, season, holiday, and market conditions; automatically detects items that are moving abnormally slowly, thereby identifying items that may be improperly displayed (e.g., behind another item on the shelf); automatically provides early warning that an item may go OOS (out-of-stock) by detecting items with abnormally high movement; automatically detects and reports on items that are OOS at retail stores; automatically summarizes OOS events for the store and retail chain management, and for suppliers, thereby identifying items that are over-stocked (too few OOS events), under-stocked (too many events), badly re-stocked (too long events); automatically analyzes the OOS events to find patterns that explain why OOS's are occurring; and automatically determining the impacts of these OOS events on store customers, thereby measuring losses to the retailer and supplier, and establishing the loyalty of consumers to the item, brand, and chain.

Detail Description Paragraph:

[0045] (2) automatically detecting items that are moving abnormally slowly, thereby identifying items that may be improperly displayed (e.g., behind another item on the shelf);

Detail Description Paragraph:

[0069] After analyzing the point-of-sale data at step 124, a decision step 126 determines whether or not the current transaction is for a "new" item. The item velocity monitoring system 10 needs to recognize the SKU designation of an item as it passes the point-of-sale sensor or bar code reader, and if it cannot recognize a particular designation as having been one that has been seen before, then it must conclude that the transaction is for an item that is being detected for the first time at this store (at least, within the experience of the item velocity monitoring system 10). If the answer at decision step 126 is YES, then a step 128 generates a

"new item" event. The logic flow then is directed to a step 130, which is an event handling routine. Several optional things can occur within the event handling routine 130, including displaying the event on the video monitor 28, storing the event in the database in non-volatile memory 24, alerting the store manager (perhaps by use of the alarm 40 in the store manager's office), or transmitting the event to a network using the modem/network card 32, or transmitting a message describing the event to a pager or a wireless handheld device such as those routinely used by inventory restocking personnel.

Detail Description Paragraph:

[0205] Excessively high service levels--When the distribution associated with the discovered attribute sets has a very low mean value, the discovered attributes have identified conditions under which service levels are too high (the item is nearly always available). This means either the item does not sell or there is too much stock in the store. Either the item should be eliminated, the shelf space should be reduced, or the frequency of restocking should be reduced. See decision step 794 and step 796 on FIG. 11. In instances in which the LOSS does not match the attributes associated with an OOS event with a standard attribute set or a discovered attribute set, the LOSS preferably collects more data and repeats the analysis process. See step 798 on FIG. 11.

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L8: Entry 1 of 1

File: PGPB

Dec 6, 2001

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 20010049690 A1

TITLE: Method and apparatus for monitoring the effective velocity of items through a store or warehouse

Pre-Grant Publication (PGPub) Document Number:
20010049690Detail Description Paragraph:

[0069] After analyzing the point-of-sale data at step 124, a decision step 126 determines whether or not the current transaction is for a "new" item. The item velocity monitoring system 10 needs to recognize the SKU designation of an item as it passes the point-of-sale sensor or bar code reader, and if it cannot recognize a particular designation as having been one that has been seen before, then it must conclude that the transaction is for an item that is being detected for the first time at this store (at least, within the experience of the item velocity monitoring system 10). If the answer at decision step 126 is YES, then a step 128 generates a "new item" event. The logic flow then is directed to a step 130, which is an event handling routine. Several optional things can occur within the event handling routine 130, including displaying the event on the video monitor 28, storing the event in the database in non-volatile memory 24, alerting the store manager (perhaps by use of the alarm 40 in the store manager's office), or transmitting the event to a network using the modem/network card 32, or transmitting a message describing the event to a pager or a wireless handheld device such as those routinely used by inventory restocking personnel.

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